United Nations S/2017/917

Security Council

Distr.: General
1 November 2017
English
Original: French

Letter dated 31 October 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to my letter of 15 August 2017 (S/2017/713) transmitting to the Security Council the executive summary of the report of the United Nations Security Management System Board of Inquiry tasked with investigating the deaths of two members of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which occurred in Kananga (Democratic Republic of the Congo). In this letter, I also informed the Security Council of my intention to discuss with officials of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to consult with Council members regarding the establishment of a follow-on mechanism, in connection with the murders of Ms. Zaida Catalán and Mr. Michael Sharp, as well as the four Congolese accompanying them.

I am pleased to inform the Security Council that I held initial consultations with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Léonard She Okitundu, on 17 August 2017 in New York. Thereafter, I dispatched my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, Saïd Djinnit, and a small team to Kinshasa, from 31 August to 1 September 2017, to continue consultations with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The understanding reached on United Nations support to the investigation conducted by the national authorities was further confirmed by an exchange of letters.

As agreed with the Congolese authorities, I intend to deploy a team to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to assist with the national investigation into the killing of Ms. Catalán, Mr. Sharp and the four Congolese nationals accompanying them.

The team will comprise a senior United Nations official, four technical experts and support staff. I have appointed Mr. Robert Petit (Canada) as the senior official to lead the team.[1] Mr. Petit will travel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, regularly and as needed, to liaise with the relevant Congolese authorities and other parties and to oversee the work of the technical experts. In addition, Mr. Petit will report to me on a regular basis. The four experts will be based in Kananga, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and be embedded with the team of investigators appointed by the national authorities responsible for the investigations into the killing of Ms. Catalán, Mr. Sharp and the four Congolese nationals.

[1] A short biographical note on Robert Petit is on file with the Secretariat.

Please recycle

The team members will have the status of officials and experts on missions for the United Nations, as defined by the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, and will be deployed within the legal framework of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), governed by the Agreement signed on 4 May 2000 in Kinshasa between the United Nations and the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the status of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC, renamed MONUSCO in 2010).

I trust that the relevant Congolese authorities will extend to the experts full cooperation and access. This will enable the team to properly assist and support the national investigation and help to ensure that the investigation and court proceedings are based on as comprehensive and robust investigations as possible.

I intend to report to the Security Council periodically on the work of the team.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**